FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS AND CHANGING THE STATUS OF WOMEN

A

SYNOPSIS

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Under the Supervision of:
Dr.Bandana Gaur (Associate Professor)
Department of Sociology & political science

Submitted by:-
Shikha sharma
Ph.D(Sociology)
Research scholar

Dean
Prof. Sanjeev swami
Faculty of social sciences

Head of the department
Prof.Poornima jain
Sociology & political science

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DAYALBAGH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)
AGRA-282005

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INTRODUCTION

Consciousness is the state of being conscious, awareness of one's own existence, sensations, thoughts, surrounding etc. And to awareness of something for what it is internal knowledge. And Feminist consciousness attacks majority positions and points out the injustice of history. A feminist advocates or supports the rights and equality of women. As feminists talked about the equality between male and female for their right and equal status in society. Nowadays we have seen the changes in status of women this all could done by the consciousness of feminist. Like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra vidhyasagar, Keshav Chandra Sen, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand and others. They were social reformer but as I told that in India women's movement had started by these social reformer and later joined by females. Here a Karl Marx theory of class consciousness has been discussed which is related to consciousness and social class. feminist consciousness stated the injustice between male and female. And Karl Marx talked that bourgeoisie is unaware of its own history and role it played in the formation of capitalism. There is, however a crucial difference here between the two classes. The bourgeoisie can never transform its false consciousness into true class consciousness; this is possible only for the proletariat. Feminism is a western word came from western women's movement and then it was used in India .Unlike the Western feminist movement, India's movement was initiated by men, and later joined by women, by the late 19th century they were joined in their efforts by their wives, sisters, daughters, protégées and other individuals directly affected by campaigns such as those carried out for women's education. By the late 20th century, women gained greater autonomy through the formation of independent women's own organizations'. By the late thirties and forties a new narrative began to be constructed regarding "women's activism". The efforts of these men included abolishing sati, which was a widow's death by burning on her husband's funeral pyre by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the custom of child marriage, abolishing the disfiguring of widows, banning the marriage of upper caste Hindu widows by Ishwar Chandra vidhyasagar, promoting women's education, obtaining legal rights for women to own property, and requiring the law to acknowledge women's status by granting them basic rights in matters such as adoption. This issue is continuing since women's movement in India.

Status is a very wide term which includes all the Aspects of human life and the idea of status also connotes the notion of equality. Status can be perceived in different ways. In ancient period enjoyed high status it is revealed as due to the practice of patriarchal family system, the birth of son was given more importance but still daughters were given all the facilities equal to son. In medieval period after the establishment of Mughal imperialism the status of women became much more pitiable in order to save Hindu religion, maintain purity of blood and protect chasity of women Brahmins made the rules regarding the women much more rigid education of girls was almost finished but after independence many efforts have been made by Indian feminists to improve the status of women therefore their status in the modern society is quite good in comparison to traditional society by the amendment of child marriage

restraint act 1929 in 1989 the girls age of marriage has been raised to 18 years and dowry prohibition act 1961 although no benefit has been gained in practical form but still the custom of directly demanding the dowry is being lessened atleast among the educated civilized families. In the same way Hindu marriage and divorce act 1955 and special marriage act 1954 have permitted women to marry away from the restrictions of religion caste and to break the bond of marriage if required. And the widow remarriage is legally approved through Hindu succession act 1956 Hindu women have got same property rights as men. Pregnancy act 1971 has helped them in keeping small family and leading a normal life after getting rid of the unmarried/unwanted motherhood. In every field and level of education now the women of middle class are also seen and in every field of occupation they are serving and earning as men for their livelihood, participation in social activities is also increasing, social awareness, self-respect and desire to prove their capabilities as men is becoming stronger day to day, joint families are breaking and their status in nuclear families is improving, purdah custom is disappearing and they are seen with respect to the society.

Feminism is a collection of movements and ideologies aimed at defining, establishing and defending equal political, economic and social rights for women. They have also advocated for workplace rights including maternity leave and against forms of discrimination against women. Feminist activists campaign for women's rights such as in contract law, property and voting, reproductive rights for women(including access to contraceptives and abortion) and the right to enter into contracts and own property, feminist theory which emerged from feminist movement aims to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining women's social roles and lived experience. Feminists fight for the equality of women and argue that women should share equally in society's opportunities and scare resources.

Liberal feminists focus their efforts on social change through the construction of legislation and regulation of employment practices and all people are created equal and should not be denied equality of opportunity because of gender. Radical feminism speaks out against all social structures because they are created by men. Socialist feminism believe that history can be made in the private sphere(home) not just the public sphere(work).the first wave of feminism took place in the late 19^{th} and early 20^{th} centuries, emerging out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal socialist politics, the goal of this wave was to open up opportunities for women with a focus on suffrage and second wave of feminism began in the 1960's and continued into the 1990's this wave unfolded in the context of the anti-war and civil rights movements and the growing. Self-consciousness variety of minority groups around the world and third phase of feminism began in the mid 1990's and is informed by post-colonial and post-modern thinking.

Feminists are angry, iconoclastic and revolutionary the ultimate aim of a feminist consciousness is to make the experience and insights of women available to the entire world, not simply to know more about women in and of themselves. The feminist consciousness in the late 20^{th} century has been greatly influenced by the develop of the so called "women liberation movement".

INDIAN FEMINISTS		
NAME	DESIGNATION	WORK
Lalithambika Antharjanam	Social reformer	Women's roles in society
Barnita Bagchi	Sociologist	Focus on women's education
Jasodhara bagchi	Founder of the school of women studies jadavpur university	Women's studies
Rita banerji	Feminist author and founder of the 50 million musing campaign	To raise awareness about the female(gendercide in India)
Durgabai deshmukh	Public activist and founder of Andhra mahila sabha	Women's emancipation
Sarladevi chaudhrani	Feminist and founder of the bharat stree mahamandal	Women's organisation in India
Prem chowdhry	Feminist	Gender studies
Saroj nalini dattt	Social reformer	Formation of education women's institutes in Bengal
Mura data gupta	Activist for women's issues	Founding members of the all India women's conference
Padma gole	Poet	Domestic lives of Indian middle class women
Devaki jain	Founder of the institute of social studies trust	Feminist economics
Brinda karat	Former vice-president	All India democratic women's association
Madhu kishwar	Founder/president of manushi sangathan	A journal about women and society
Vina mazumdar	Founding director	Centre for women's development studies
Uma Narayan	Feminist scholar	Vassar college
Gita sahgal	Feminist	Women's right/human rights activist

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEROETICAL FRAMEWORK

Literature review has been categorised in two parts: First part of literature review is related to feminist consciousness and second is related to status of women.

Literature review on feminist consciousness

- **Beauvoir de Simon (1949):**- dealt with the treatment of women throughout history and is often regarded as a major work of feminist philosophy and the starting point of second-wave feminism is an exposition of "the pervasiveness and intensity and mysteriousness of the history of women's oppression.
- **Kelly Joan (1984):**-demonstrated a solid tradition of women thinking about women and sexual politics in European society and objective of the study to know the feminism thought as a phenomenon and used the qurelle theory. According to them, are culturally and not just biologically formed women formed a social group they directed their ideas against the notions of an inherently defective sex feminist theory was shaped by the new pressures this society created for women.
- **Jain Jasbir (1986):-** seeks to analyse the feminist movement in India in a historical perspective, free from the hangover of western concerns. In six chapters, she undertakes this study of feminist discourse, textualising history and historicising texts. She holds up for close examination select principal texts, ranging from the Upanishads and the Itihasas (epics) down to the contemporary regional novels and films. She says: "Draupati deconstructed the notions of chastity and sati; Sita, of power and motherhood; Kali, of violence; Puru's young wife, of sexuality; the bhakta women, of marriage and prayer."
- **Mohanty Chandra Talpade (1986):-** by is perhaps the first ever written critique of the hegemonic feminist discourse of the West by an Indian. Analyses the portrayal of the "Third World Women" as presented in Western feminist works. She not only exposes but also provides a critique of hegemonic "Western" feminisms. Detects the so-called "colonialist move" in a number of Western radical and liberal feminist writings, and accordingly marks out three analytical presuppositions in those texts which led to the production of the Third World Woman as "a singular and monolithic subject.
- **Moi Toril (1986):**-the word feminist or feminism are political levels and aim of the research to search new women's movement which emerged in the late 1960's and used ontology found in the analysis the principle that women should have political rights equal to those of men, the movement to win such rights for women.
- **Chakravorty Gayatri (1987):**-has pointed out that feminism is not about adding in women's rights but about transforming society, so that feminism may be called transformational politics because everything affects women, every issue is women's issue and there is a feminist perspective on every subject.
- **Offen Karen (1988)**:-written to differentiate between original and revolutionary character of modern. Feminism found it castigate feminism because it is insufficiently revolutionary and geared to the concerns of the working class and women's movement were meet with respect to all women.
- **Kumar Radha (1990)-** described feminist movement in India. It notes the historical context of the movement and gives an account on the struggle of the radical thickness and social reformist, who first raised issues of women's fundamental rights. It gives an account of women's participation in freedom struggle and the emergence of the feminist movement as a process. It reviews contemporary feminist movement and

analysis the issues caused on dowry deaths, rape case and practice of sati. It present selective survey of major campaigns, organizations and figures defining issues that were raised and fright, photographs, old and new documents, excepts from letters, books and informal writings, case history of social activist makes good an interesting reading. It is a brief, interpretative account on history of women's movement in India, both pre and post-independence period.

- **Pande Mrinal (1996):**-made a similar argument about the feminist stance on goddesses. Despite the appropriation of Kali as the name of the most visible feminist press in India, the feminist distance from religion alienates them from the vast majority of Indian women for whom goddesses are a source of strength, meaning, and joy.
- **Ghosh Arpita (2000):**-The emergence of "Feminism" has been a powerful challenge to the prevailing power structures and gender equations at the level of the family, the economy and the polity. The term "feminism" evokes many positive associations and connotations when used in the Western context. Undoubtedly, this revolutionary movement played a vital role in liberating and recycling the status of women. This evolved from women's own awareness and their struggles against power structures which excluded them from equal participation in many aspects of the economic, social and political life of their society.
- **Mittra Ranjana (2001):-** Conducted a study on the feminine organisation will it help career women overcome gender bias with a sample of 50 employed women. Working as doctors, teachers and bank clerks. The idea and the need of a feminine organisation was explained to them and analysis of data brought out that a feminine organisation may be detrimental to women's long term growth and development, feminine organisation women will not be able to make men understand their needs their problems. Hardly 10 out of 50 women accepted that they have faced some form of sexual harassment.

Literature review on status of women

- **Friedan Betty (1957):** -conducted a survey of her former Smith College classmates for their 15th anniversary reunion; the results, in which she found that many of them were unhappy with their lives as housewives, prompted her to begin research for The Feminine Mystique, conducting interviews with other suburban housewives, as well as researching psychology, media, and advertising. She originally intended to publish an article on the topic, not a book, but no magazine would publish her article.

- **Millett Kate (1969):**-argued that "sex has a frequently neglected political aspect" and goes on to discuss the role that patriarchy plays in sexual relations Firestone argued that gender inequality originated in the patriarchal societal structures imposed upon women through their biology; the physical, social and psychological disadvantages imposed by pregnancy, childbirth, and subsequent rearing. She advocated the use of cybernetics to carry out human reproduction in laboratories as well as the proliferation of contraception, abortion, and state support for child-rearing; enabling them to escape their biologically determined positions in society. Firestone described pregnancy as "barbaric", and writes that a friend of hers compared labor to "shitting a pumpkin". Among the reproductive technologies she predicted were sex selection and in vitro fertilization Firestone explored a number of possible social changes that she argued would result in a

post-patriarchal society, including the abolition of the nuclear family and the promotion of living in community units within a socialist society.

- **Sivaramayya B (1983) -**discussed at ancient shastric Hindu law in matters of rights of women; sati practices, the involvement of the British in enacting laws to protect women's social status. It examines views, interpretations of courts, legislature in matters of bigamy, conjugal rights, inheritance, divorce, maintenance under Hindu marriage act and Muslim personal laws. It also looks at the Muslim community views. It examines the provisions of criminal procedure code and the Indian penal code in relation to above topics. This article cites instances, circumstances of litigation and court interpretations and views. In this article an attempt is made by the author to critically examine the social status of women by way of legislation, judicial interpretations and processes.
- **Hooks Bell (1984):-**described to study the social equality between men and women through used the anything goes approach in this study and conclusion regard the situation explained that any women who wants social equality with men regardless of her political perspective can level feminist
- **Deshpande Shashi (1989)**:-dealt with the hardships of an Indian housewife who maintains a long silence throughout her life. She is a symbol of a typical, submissive Indian housewife who patiently bears all the troubles afflicted on her by the male dominated society. Jaya keeps her eyes shut to her husband's illegal earnings at office. Even her journalistic writings are circumscribed by her husband's likes and dislike. While recapitulating her past she thinks.
- **Sood Sushma 1990):-**included articles on everything from wife battering to female infanticide to violence against elderly women. The chapters are written by social activists, doctors, and lawyers, all of whom are involved with women's rights in India. Most of the chapter send with the authors providing practical suggestions on how to improve women's status in India, including pushing for social and legal changes
- **Mazumdar Mita (1991**):-discussed at length the effect of modernization on the rural women. It states that the declining status of the rural woman is not because of technology alone. It is the result of a combination of forces in the form of literacy, caste and class barrier, low self-perception of women and the lackadaisical attitude of the Govt. towards women's issues.to increase the participation of women in agricultural development it is not enough to review the policy matters alone. They will be effective only when there will be social change in favour of women, particularly, those from the most marginalized classes.
- **Gandhi N and Shah N (1993):-**commented on the fact that the issue of domestic violence is made somewhat simplistic in its treatment by feminists and social workers in India through negligence of important aspects of caste and religion that intertwine with women's identities as women and have implications on how they perceive and experience violence in homes and outside of homes. Kannibaran and Kannibaran have taken stances against a homogenized model of feminist activism based on the realities of urban middle-class women who are the ones affected by dowry.
- **Bajpai Asha (1997)-**expressed the views of the author, emerged after a symposium held in Bombay to discuss the effects of the post 1990 economic liberalization era on the women workers in organised and unorganized sectors and to recommend thereby a legal strategy for empowerment of women comparing the situation in India and U.K., it explains that due to the job losses in organised sector there will be further pressure on the unorganized sector. It states the areas of concern and recommendations for legal interventions, emerged from the various presentations and discussions at the

symposium, and condensed from the Indian and UK experiences. Out of them a policy for employment of women has been briefly discussed in this part of the article.

- **Ram Ranjini (1998):-** explained the evolution and concept of custody and guardianship under the Hindu Law. It points out that the laws continue to be discriminatory and relegates the position of the mother to a secondary status. Divorce of parents proves to be very traumatic on their children. Whatever maybe the differences between the parents, responsibilities towards children cannot be avoided. Determination of custody, child support and alimony have not yet indicated a compliance with non-discriminatory policies. Comparison with Western laws shows that the focus in the west is concentrated on a blend of the welfare and tenderness concept towards furthering the rights of the child and also give an equitable status to the hitherto weak mother. Finally, some of the Indian Law Commissions recommendations are provided which aim at removing discrimination of children, at the same time keeping in mind the welfare of the children.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Feminist consciousness has often relied on feminist self-identification as an indicator of women's group consciousness and it was not limited to women. Women studies cared only about those aspects of life where women played a part and feminist consciousness attacks majority positions and points out the injustice of history and when we talked about the any kind of issue which is socially related to women we have focused on the status of women in different periods because history of women and their status is must to understand the issues related to women and shows the status of women in ancient period can be called the golden age are to regarding the status of women because in this period they enjoyed high status and it is revealed as due to the practice of patriarchal family system, the birth of a son was given more importance but still daughters were given all the facilities equal to son here was no discrimination between the son and daughter regarding education and in medieval period after the establishment of Mughal imperialism the status of women because much more pitiable in order to save Hindu religion maintain purity of blood and protect chastity of women. Brahmins made the rules regarding the women much more rigid education of girls was almost finished purdah system got much more encouraged and the age of girls marriage and after independence many efforts have been made to improve the status of women therefore the, status of women in the modern society is rather better than traditional society and after efforts to know the status of women in different periods.it empowered and can be said that the status of women gradually changed time to time and in modern time they became more empowered and in modern era they are living in a well-being society.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Feminist consciousness and changing status of women is a social aspect which fascinates of those women who wanted the strong equal status in their life. Here a main thing has been considered that Indian feminists who have fought against the inequality between men and women gave a new changed scenario to society. When we see that status of women has gradually changed in society then we have focused on the history of women. It tells us that in ancient period they enjoyed high status and it is revealed as due to the practice of patriarchal family system, the birth of a son was given more importance but still daughters were given all the facilities equal to son here was no discrimination between the son and daughter regarding education and in medieval period after the establishment of Mughal imperialism the status of women because much more pitiable in order to save Hindu religion maintain purity of blood and protect chastity of women. Brahmins made the rules regarding the women much more rigid education of girls was almost finished purdah system got much more encouraged and the age of girls marriage. And in modern time the status of women is quite good they got equal status in society. Previous studies shows that many studies has conducted related to this such as feminist movement, gender equality, feminist philosophy and feminist theory but no study so far has been conducted on "feminist consciousness and changing status of women "and these findings may prove that status of women is affecting through feminist consciousness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the theoretical perspective of feminist consciousness and the changing status of women.
- To know the impact of feminist consciousness on women of educational sector.
- To know the impact of feminist consciousness on women of banking sector.
- To study the degree of consciousness in women for legal rights.
- To find out the challenges faced by women to uplift their status.

HYPOTHESIS

H0: Feminist consciousness has no impact on women of educational sector.

H1: Feminist consciousness has impact on women of educational sector.

H0: Feminist consciousness has no impact on women of banking sector.

H1: Feminist consciousness has impact on women of banking sector.

H0: Women has no consciousness for legal rights.

H1: Women has consciousness for legal rights.

OUTLINE OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN:-Descriptive research design will be used to analyse the impact of feminist consciousness and changing status of women. And factorial analysis will be used to two way ANOVA test to analysis the factors of an independent variable

UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY:-This research will be restricted on working Women of educational and banking sector of Agra city. This area will be chosen because this study is mainly focus on impact of feminist consciousness and changing status of women. Area of research will be selected through simple random sampling (lottery method).Educational sector will be categorised in three levels (universities, colleges and schools).2 universities, 5 colleges and 5 schools will be selected in these three levels of educational sector and banking sector will be divided in two types of category (private and public banks).20 banks will be public banks and 19 will be private banks.5 branches of each bank will be taken to collect information.

SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING METHOD: - Simple random sampling (lottery method) will be used to decide a population of selected area. Working females of educational (universities, colleges and schools) and banking sector (private and public banks) of Agra city will be selected to sample unit. Working females will be categorised in general, SCs/STs and obc category. And only those universities, colleges and schools will be taken which is listed in Agra district administration. And those banks will be taken which is listed in IInd schedule of RBI bank. This population is only concentrated on working females of educational and banking sector. List of population of both sectors will be taken personally and then it will be prepared accordingly a table which is given below.16% part of population of each sector which is divided in three and two levels will be taken to decide sample size through lottery method of simple random sampling. Target population will be around 16% of each level of both sectors and sample size will be around 312.

TABLE-1.1

S.No	Categories-wise female population in two sectors						
	Educational sector			Banking Sector			
	Categories	Female population	16% population from each category	Categories	Female population	16% population from each category	Total Sample size
1	General	525	84	General	530	85	Educational sector-156
2	SCs/STs	184	30	SCs/STs	183	30	
3	OBCs	260	42	OBCs	262	41	Banking sector-156
	Total	969	156	Total	975	156	156+156 =312

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION:- Researcher will be used primary and secondary method of data collection. Primary data will be collected through Interviews, focus group and Interview schedule, observation and some case studies will also be used in this study. Interview schedule will be measured on nominal, likert and interval scale. Primary research consists of a collection of original primary data collected by the researcher. And Secondary data will be collected through books, journals, previous research, Official statistics, Mass media products, Government reports, and Historical data and information.

PILOT STUDY:-The pilot study will be conducted on 35 respondents out of 312.It is the study of pre-testing of questionnaire and interview schedule.

ANALYSIS OF DATA:-In the following research tabulation, M.S Excel sheet, average and percentage will be used to analysis of data and pie-chart, bar diagram will be used to data presentation. In statistical analysis parametric (two way anova) and non-parametric (chi-square) test will be used to statistical significance and valid conclusion will be drawn.SPSS Statistics version 16.0 will be used to statistical analysis of data.

OPERATIONALIZATION OF CONCEPT

Feminist consciousness and changing status of women will be defined and operationalized to make measurements of variables easy.

Sampling unit will be selected working females of educational and banking sector. Working females will be divided in three categories: General, SCs/STs, and OBC under the age group of 21-50 above. Feminist consciousness will be divided in high and low consciousness. Educational sector will be divided in three levels: universities, colleges and schools and banking sector will be divided in public and private banks.

TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION

CHAPTER-1

- CONTEXT OF THE STUDY
- CONCEPTUAL & THEORETICAL CLARIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM
- REVIEW OF LITERATURE
- ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

(A) STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

(B) SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

- PLANNING OF THE STUDY

  (A)AIM

  (B)HYPOTHESIS

  (C)METHOD

  (D)ANALYSIS OF DATA
- FIELD OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER-2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS AND CHANGING STATUS OF WOMEN.

CHAPTER-3

IMPACT OF FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS ON WOMEN OF EDUCATIONAL SECTOR.

CHAPTER-4

IMPACT OF FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS ON WOMEN OF BANKING SECTOR.

CHAPTER-5

DEGREE OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN WOMEN FOR LEGAL RIGHTS

CHAPTER-6

CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN TO UPLIFT THEIR STATUS

CHAPTER-7

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

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